

REMARKS

Claims 1-4, 6-8, 11-14, 17-23, and 25-30 are pending in this application. Claims 1, 6, 17-19, 26 and 27 are independent. In light of the remarks made herein, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the outstanding rejections.

In the outstanding Official Action, the Examiner rejected claims 1-4, 6-8, 11-14, 17-23, 25-27 and 31 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Garfinkle (USP 6,133,985) in view of Stein, et al. (USP 5,826,241); and rejected 2-3, 7, 13-14, and 22-23 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Garfinkle in view of Parulski (EPO 0860980). Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections.

Examiner Interview

Applicants wish to thank the Examiner for the telephonic interview conducted on August 25, 2004. During the interview, the parties discussed the elements as set forth in claims 1, 6, 17-19, and 26-27. The Examiner agreed that the claims as amended March 30, 2004, overcome the cited references and further indicated that upon submission of a formal reply, the claims would be reconsidered. In accordance with the filing of this reply, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner formally reconsider the pending claims.

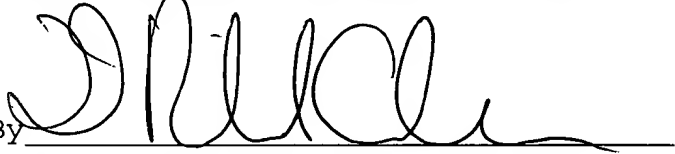
Conclusion


Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact Catherine M. Voisinet (Reg. No. 52,327) at the telephone number of the undersigned below, to conduct an interview in an effort to expedite prosecution in connection with the present application.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

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